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General and complete disarmament

Nuclear disarmament; follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons; reducing nuclear danger

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present annual report refers to the efforts undertaken to facilitate the implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and contains a compilation of views submitted by Member States.

* A/73/50.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to requests contained in General Assembly resolutions 72/58, 72/38 and 72/41.

2. In paragraph 3 of resolution 72/58, the General Assembly requested all States to inform the Secretary-General of the efforts and measures they had taken with respect to the implementation of the resolution and nuclear disarmament and requested the Secretary-General to apprise the Assembly of that information at its seventy-third session.

3. In paragraph 22 of resolution 72/38, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-third session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

4. In paragraph 5 of resolution 72/41, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to intensify efforts and support initiatives that would contribute to the full implementation of the seven recommendations identified in the report of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters that would significantly reduce the risk of nuclear war (A/56/400, para. 3), and to continue to encourage Member States to consider the convening of an international conference, as proposed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2), to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-third session.

5. By notes verbales dated 6 February 2018, Member States were invited to communicate their views on the issue. Replies received from Member States are included in section III below; any views received after 15 May 2018 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs,[1] in the language of submission only. No addenda will be issued.

II. Observations

6. Since the previous report (A/72/321), States have undertaken various efforts to facilitate the implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. In particular:

(a) An informal meeting of the General Assembly to mark the observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests was held on 30 August 2017 at United Nations Headquarters. Opening statements were made by the President of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, Peter Thomson (Fiji), by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, on behalf of the Secretary-General, and by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Roman Vassilenko. Following the opening ceremony, a plenary debate was held to reflect on progress made to end nuclear testing, current and emerging challenges, and opportunities to strengthen the global norm against testing;

(b) Pursuant to the declaration, by the General Assembly, of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (resolution 68/32), the meeting to commemorate that day was held on 26 September 2017. It was chaired by the President of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, Miroslav Lajčák (Slovakia). The Secretary-General marked the occasion with a message in which he highlighted that a world free of nuclear weapons was a global vision that required a global response and reiterated the readiness of the United Nations to work with all States to achieve that objective. As was the case in 2016, civil society also made an important contribution to the commemoration and

[1] www.un.org/disarmament.

promotion of the International Day. Statements were delivered by representatives of non-governmental organizations;

(c) The 2018 session of the Disarmament Commission, the first session of its three-year cycle, was held from 2 to 20 April 2018 in New York, chaired by Gillian Bird (Australia). At the session, procedural reports of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies were adopted. The report of the Commission for 2018 (A/73/42) reflects that, during its 10 meetings, Working Group I on agenda item 4, "Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", held extensive discussions. The Chair, Diedre Mills (Jamaica), introduced non-papers addressing objectives, principles and recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, on which views were exchanged and various proposals made. A number of delegations sought to promote discussions on a more focused topic, including recommendations for urgent action to reduce risks, facilitate further reductions and prevent the use of nuclear weapons. Following discussions by the Working Group, the Chair decided to issue a Chair's paper, under her own responsibility and without prejudice to the position of any delegation. The Chair also annexed to her paper a compilation of written proposals, made by Member States at the 2018 meetings of the Working Group, without prejudice to the right of any State to put forward additional proposals in the future. The Working Group agreed to continue its discussion on the Chair's paper at the next session of the Commission;

(d) Under the guidance of the first President of the 2018 session, Ravinatha Aryasinha (Sri Lanka), the Conference on Disarmament adopted decision CD/2119 establishing five subsidiary bodies. The subsidiary bodies were mandated (i) to reach an understanding on the areas of commonalities in the Conference on Disarmament by taking into consideration all relevant views and proposals past, present and future; (ii) to deepen technical discussions and broaden areas of agreement, including through the participation, in accordance with the rules of procedure, of relevant experts; and (iii) to consider effective measures, including legal instruments for negotiations on each of the agenda items of the Conference. Subsequently, under the guidance of the third President of the 2018 session, Sabrina Dallafior (Switzerland), by decision CD/2126, Hasan Kleib (Indonesia) was appointed as coordinator for subsidiary body 1, Cessation of the arms race and nuclear disarmament, while Robbert Jan Gabriëlse (Netherlands) was appointed as coordinator for subsidiary body 2, Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters. In line with the timetable annexed to the decision, the subsidiary bodies will each hold seven meetings to execute their mandates. The coordinators will submit to the Conference on Disarmament, through its President, a report on the progress achieved and agreed in each subsidiary body, for adoption and due reflection in the annual report of the Conference to the General Assembly;

(e) The two nuclear-weapon States with the largest arsenals took steps to implement the reductions agreed to in the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. According to information provided by the parties, in February 2018, the United States and the Russian Federation met the central limits on strategic arms of the Treaty. As at 5 February 2018, according to the data provided by the parties on their aggregate holdings of strategic offensive arms, the Russian Federation possessed 527 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers and 1,444 warheads on those systems, and the United States possessed 652 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers and 1,350 warheads on those systems.

7. In addition to the efforts discussed above, the following other multilateral initiatives have been pursued that could contribute to the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons:

(a) At the tenth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in New York on 20 September 2017, ministers for foreign affairs and other high-level representatives of States adopted a Final Declaration and Measures to Promote the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In the declaration, they reaffirmed the vital importance and urgency of the entry into force of the Treaty and urged the remaining eight annex 2 States, whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty, to sign and ratify it without further delay;

(b) The second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was held in Geneva from 23 April to 4 May 2018. Adam Bugajski (Poland) was elected to chair the meeting. The session was ultimately unable to agree to attach the Chair's factual summary to its report. Following past practice, the Chair announced that he would submit his summary as a working paper under his own responsibility. On key disarmament matters, States parties underlined the necessity of fully and effectively implementing the decisions and the resolution adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 Review Conference, including the action plan. With respect to other regional issues, many delegations condemned the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, but cautiously welcomed dialogue between that country and the United States. Support was expressed for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between the Islamic Republic of Iran and E3/EU+3 (China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States), and several delegations stressed the need for all parties to maintain their constructive engagement;[2]

(c) On 20 September 2017, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (A/CONF.229/2017/8) was opened for signature in New York. The Treaty will enter into force 90 days following the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification. As at 5 July 2018, 59 States had signed the Treaty and 11 had ratified it;

(d) In General Assembly resolution 71/259, the Secretary-General was requested to establish a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, to convene in 2017 and 2018, with a mandate to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of a future non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. The preparatory group was requested to examine, with a view to making recommendations, the report of the group of governmental experts established by the Assembly pursuant to its resolution 67/53 (A/70/81), as well as the views submitted by Member States on the issue as contained in documents A/68/154, A/68/154/Add.1, A/71/140/Rev.1 and A/71/140/Rev.1/Add.1. Informal open-ended consultative meetings were convened in New York, in March 2017 and February 2018, by the Chair of the preparatory group. The consultative meetings were intended to allow all Member States to engage in interactive discussions and share their views. At the time of preparation of the present report, the preparatory group had concluded its second and last session in Geneva and had adopted a consensus report to be transmitted by the Secretary-General to the

[2] See www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt2020/prepcom2018/.

General Assembly at its seventy-third session and to the Conference on Disarmament prior to its 2019 session.

8. Despite some progress in implementing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and pursuing new initiatives to support those goals, setbacks and growing impatience with the slow pace of progress have persisted. In particular:

(a) Progress towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution on a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East has been challenging. During the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, most States parties reaffirmed their support for the concept of convening a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East; however, it is clear that, despite many efforts, States of the region have not come closer together on a mutually agreeable path leading towards the establishment of such a zone;

(b) The Conference on Disarmament has not resumed negotiations, despite some progress owing to the adoption of decision CD/2119;

(c) While efforts towards reducing existing stockpiles are acknowledged, the estimated total number of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, still amounts to several thousand. Moreover, States continue to rely on nuclear weapons in defence and security policies and undertake programmes to modernize their weapons, delivery systems and related infrastructure;

(d) The Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted its sixth nuclear test on 2 September 2017, and a further six launches using ballistic missile technology between August and November 2017. In 2018, however, the previous cycle of escalation gave way to intense diplomatic efforts on advancing sustainable peace and the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The country has not conducted a launch using ballistic missile technology since its November launch of a missile of intercontinental range, and it announced a moratorium on nuclear explosive tests in April 2018.

9. In accordance with the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament, entitled "Securing our Common Future", launched on 24 May 2018 in Geneva, the Secretary-General and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs will increase their efforts to facilitate dialogue among Member States, through engagement in formal and informal settings, in order to help Member States to return to a common vision and path leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

III. Information received from Governments

Austria

[Original: English]
[15 May 2018]

Against the background of consistent Austrian support for nuclear disarmament efforts and its constitutional law (No. 149/1999) on a nuclear-free Austria, Austria strongly supports the conclusion and recommendations for follow-on actions agreed upon at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and is also particularly engaged in overcoming the current lack of effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery, in particular that of the Conference on Disarmament, and the resulting absence of substantive multilateral disarmament negotiations.

Building notably on the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, Austria is convinced of the need to fundamentally change the discourse on nuclear weapons and to foster the understanding that any use of nuclear weapons would be morally repugnant and devastating in its effects on the whole world and all of humankind. Consequently, it is difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with international law, in particular with the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. Austria considers the mere existence of nuclear weapons to be unacceptable, given the risks of their use, either intentionally or by accident or mistake, and the resulting unacceptable humanitarian consequences.

The humanitarian initiative has re-emphasized the important fact that nuclear weapons concern not only the security of the few States possessing them, but also that of all States of the world. This is true not only with regard to the spread of nuclear weapons to additional States, but also with regard to those that already have them. As reflected in the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the devastation caused by a nuclear war would be visited upon all mankind, not only upon the States immediately involved militarily. The final document of the 2010 Review Conference acknowledges that by referring explicitly to the principle of undiminished security for all. In view of the humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons, undiminished security for all will only be attained by the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Austria has therefore vigorously supported nuclear disarmament efforts, which it considers an obligation for all States. The humanitarian considerations have become a decisive factor for the negotiations for a legal instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, which took place within the United Nations framework in March, June and July 2017 in New York. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted in July 2017 by 122 States. Together with 50 other States, Austria signed the Treaty in September 2017, on the margins of the General Assembly. On 8 May 2018, Austria ratified the Treaty.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons represents the first concrete result of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations since the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996. It contributes, in particular, to the implementation of article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, thereby strengthening the latter as a whole. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons constitutes an impressive manifestation of the view of the vast majority of States that nuclear weapons, far from providing security, are actually an existential threat for humanity, owing to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of their use. Austria submitted a working paper on the security implications of nuclear weapons to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, held in Geneva from 23 April to 4 May 2018.

Furthermore, Austria would like to refer to the importance of recognizing, within the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its review cycle, the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and the need to comply at all times with international law and international humanitarian law. Since the previous Review Conference in 2015, the progress of international discussions on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons proceeding from the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference has been a momentous development in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Those discussions have led to accumulated evidence on how any use of a nuclear weapon would have a disastrous, far-reaching and long-term impact. In order to underline the urgency of nuclear disarmament, help fundamentally change the discourse on nuclear weapons and foster the understanding that any use of nuclear weapons would be morally repugnant and devastating in its global effects, Austria submitted a working paper on that issue, jointly with some 20 other States, to the second session of the Preparatory Committee

for the 2020 Review Conference. Austria remains committed to engaging in multilateral negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, under strict and effective international control, including under the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[11 May 2018]

Cuba concurs with the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. In this context, Cuba has actively participated in the major multilateral forums addressing this topic, namely the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission, the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

As a State party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, which established the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone and part of the region officially declared a zone of peace, Cuba has called on nuclear-weapon States and others protected by the nuclear umbrella to comply with their clear obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Although it has been more than 20 years since the International Court of Justice declared the use of nuclear weapons illegal in its advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, very little progress has been made towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence continues to be a core part of the military defence and security doctrines of some States. Of even greater concern is the fact that some States envisage the use of nuclear weapons against States that do not possess them, in response to attacks using non-nuclear weapons.

We oppose the enhancement and upgrading of existing nuclear weapons, their delivery systems and related infrastructure, which is inconsistent with the obligation to adopt effective measures towards nuclear disarmament.

Cuba constructively supported the negotiations in the United Nations General Assembly culminating in the adoption on 7 July 2017 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which establishes a legally binding international standard for the prohibition of nuclear weapons without any exception or recognition of extenuating circumstances.

Cuba became the fifth State to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 31 January 2018, as proof the country's political will and commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. Cuba calls for the early entry into force of the Treaty and its universalization and reaffirms that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner within a clearly defined time frame.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[15 May 2018]

The foreign policy of Ecuador relating to nuclear weapons has always been guided by its Constitution, which condemns the development and use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, as a threat to the survival of humankind.

In line with these principles, Ecuador has ratified all the international instruments related to nuclear weapons, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the additional protocols on safeguards and cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency. Ecuador also participated actively in the negotiation and adoption, on 7 July 2017, of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was signed by the President of the Republic of Ecuador, Lenin Moreno Garcés, on the day of its opening for signature, 20 September 2017, and is in the constitutional process for subsequent ratification.

Article 1 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons expressly prohibits the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Thus it is manifestly clear, as the International Court of Justice stated, that if the use of a weapon is illegal, which is clearly the case of nuclear weapons because their catastrophic consequences are contrary to the principles of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, the threat of their use is also illegal. Consequently, all States should remove from their military doctrines any reference to nuclear deterrence and should refrain from engaging in military preparations that entail the possibility, and therefore the threat, of the use of nuclear weapons, whether their own or in the context of broad partnerships.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, of which Ecuador is a proud member, has reiterated at its summits of Heads of State and Government, most recently in January 2017 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, as well as the Charter of the United Nations (special declaration on nuclear disarmament).

Following the ban on nuclear weapons, through a legally binding international instrument, the only effective guarantee against their use or threat of use is their total elimination, in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner, within a defined time frame.

El Salvador

[Original: Spanish]
[15 May 2018]

The Republic of El Salvador supports all actions aimed at strengthening the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, as well as all efforts to renew the commitment of the international community to move towards the definitive elimination of weapons of mass destruction, through multilateral negotiations and in accordance with the principles of verification, irreversibility and transparency.

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, El Salvador considers the Treaty as the foundation and cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament regime. It is therefore extremely important for El Salvador to reaffirm its commitment to the Treaty, in order to strengthen joint work for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

El Salvador believes that the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their use or threat of use is a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law, human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Therefore, El Salvador agrees with the vast majority of the international community that no State or international body is ready to adequately address the humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation and provide necessary assistance to those affected; in addition, the effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, irrespective of the cause, would have a devastating impact on multiple countries and populations across borders, including a regional or global impact.

In that regard, El Salvador is convinced that nuclear energy should be used for peaceful purposes only and recognizes the sovereign right of all countries of the world to exploit and use nuclear technologies solely and exclusively for these purposes, as established in article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Furthermore El Salvador is a proud to be a member of the region of Latin America and the Caribbean that was declared the first densely populated area free of nuclear weapons, as established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco). This reflects our commitment and duty to put an end to the arms race, especially in nuclear weapons, and to build global peace based on mutual respect and good neighbourliness, for the benefit of the region and all of humanity.

It is a matter of great concern to El Salvador that, more than 20 years after the adoption of the text of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the latter has not been able to enter into force. The annex II countries are therefore urged to take steps towards the swift ratification of the Treaty.

Accordingly, El Salvador considered it highly important to unconditionally support the negotiations, held within the framework of the United Nations in March and June of 2017, leading to the successful drafting of a treaty finally providing for the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons as part of the urgent need for all weapons of mass destruction to be explicitly prohibited under international law, as achieved under the regimes prohibiting the use and existence of biological and chemical weapons. This is consistent with the provisions of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

In that regard, El Salvador participated actively in these landmark negotiations and also represented the region as President Pro Tempore of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in order to achieve the best possible text. It worked in a transparent, comprehensive and inclusive manner with all members of the international community committed to the elimination of nuclear weapons to ensure that the Treaty included all ideas and perspectives that would guarantee the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free world. El Salvador is therefore pleased to be one of the first countries to have signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, on 20 September 2017, within the framework of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[10 April 2018]

Lebanese Army Command would like to reaffirm following:

- Lebanon does not possess or produce weapons of mass destruction. It complies with the resolutions of the United Nations in that regard and is opposed to the legality of the threat or use of such weapons.
- Lebanon welcomes and supports all initiatives aimed at bringing about general and complete disarmament, especially in the Middle East, and emphasizes that the region should be free of weapons of mass destruction. It is, however, concerned at the failure of the Israeli enemy to comply with international law. Israel maintains a nuclear arsenal that constitutes a constant threat to all the States of the region and, consequently, to international peace and security.
- The Arab States must continue to call for the establishment of a region free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, because that is the only available option for addressing the threats that the nuclear armaments of the Israeli enemy and its other weapons of mass destruction pose to international peace and Arab national security.
- The international community should continue to demand that all States in the region, including the Israeli enemy, should sign treaties on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons.
- It is imperative to unify the Arab position, expand the role of the League of Arab States, take action to acquire the scientific knowledge and secure the equipment required to protect against weapons of mass destruction, and follow up on efforts to demonstrate that the Israeli enemy does not participate in international treaties.
- Lebanon calls on the international community to begin using peaceful nuclear technologies and to increase their use in all endeavours that support sustainable development. It also calls for the various needs of the Arab States be taken into account.

Madagascar

[Original: French]
[15 May 2018]

The United Nations calls on Member States not only to ratify the various nuclear disarmament treaties, but also to comply with them.

Madagascar has joined these efforts by adopting and ratifying a number of the relevant international treaties.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[3 May 2018]

In its 1996 advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice notes the obligation to pursue in good faith, and to bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. Therefore, as a responsible global actor, Mexico participated fully and proactively during the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding

instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, held in New York in 2017.

For Mexico the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted on 7 July 2017, is a historic milestone. Its adoption and entry into force will represent an important step forward, demonstrating the existence of an international custom that prohibits the production, possession, use and transfer of nuclear weapons by the States that have decided to accede to it.

This instrument is consistent with the recognized and long-standing diplomatic tradition of support shown by Mexico for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Mexico therefore deposited its instrument of ratification on 16 January 2018.

Based on its firm conviction, Mexico will seek to encourage the early entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and will continue to participate actively in the various forums dealing with nuclear disarmament.

Since 2009, Mexico has proposed an amendment within the framework of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in order to characterize the use of nuclear weapons during an international armed conflict as a war crime.

At the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, Mexico, in its national capacity and with the support of other States, was the co-author or main sponsor of the following resolutions on disarmament issues adopted by the First Committee:

(i) Resolution 72/45: Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas.

(ii) Resolution 72/58: Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

(iii) Resolution 72/39: Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments.

(iv) Resolution 72/31: Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

(v) Resolution 72/30: Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

(vi) Resolution 72/37: Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

(vii) Decision 72/514: Nuclear disarmament verification.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[15 May 2018]

The Russian Federation is committed to achieving the long-term goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction. We believe that the corresponding process must be conducted in strict accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in a context of universal and complete disarmament. The only realistic option in this regard is to adopt a balanced and phased approach involving the gradual establishment of a conducive environment to progress towards nuclear disarmament, so that appropriate steps can be taken to strengthen international stability and security on the basis of the principle of increased security for all. Indeed, this approach was developed by consensus under the review process of the Treaty.

We respect the views of those advocating the rapid renunciation of nuclear weapons. We are united by the shared noble aim of building a world free of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, we consider attempts to focus the disarmament process on the

early and unconditional prohibition and renunciation of nuclear arsenals to be premature and disconcerting. We believe that such initiatives not only fail to contribute to the stated noble objective, but also threaten the viability and effectiveness of the groundbreaking Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We are convinced that the movement for nuclear disarmament should be led in a way that strengthens international security and stability, without destabilizing the existing world order.

In our view the international community's efforts with regard to nuclear disarmament should, at this stage, be focused on paving the way for further steps in this field.

We call upon all members of the international community to vigorously engage in addressing urgent international security and stability issues. These include the unlimited deployment of global anti-ballistic missile systems, the development of high-accuracy strategic offensive weapons in non-nuclear equipment, problems affecting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the prospect of weaponizing outer space and growing imbalances in the quantity and quality of conventional weapons. Failure to resolve these issues destroys trust between States, undermines the disarmament architecture and remains a major obstacle to effective disarmament efforts.

The Russian Federation has acted responsibly in accordance with its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, taking concrete steps to limit and reduce its nuclear weapons and to uphold and strengthen the most important international legal regimes in the field of arms control and non-proliferation.

Over the past 30 years, Russia has contributed significantly to promoting a world free of nuclear weapons, having managed to reduce its nuclear arsenal by over 85 per cent.

The 1987 Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles ensured the destruction of two classes of missiles: over 1,800 ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of between 500 and 5,500 kilometres, and more than 800 of their launchers. In total, over 3,000 nuclear warheads with an explosive yield of over 500,000 kilotons have been deactivated. Russia has put forward a proposal to make the obligations under that Treaty universal.

The Russian Federation has fully complied with its obligations under the 1991 Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms and the 2002 Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States of America on Strategic Offensive Reductions. Russia has reduced the number of its deployed strategic warheads from 9,000 to 1,700 units, and has also decommissioned more than 1,600 launchers for intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles, more than 3,100 such missiles, approximately 50 strategic ballistic missile submarines and some 70 heavy bombers.

On 8 April 2010, the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms was signed in Prague (it entered into force on 5 February 2011).

In this Treaty, the parties agreed to cut the total number of warheads by one third to 1,550 units (the ceiling prior to the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions had been 2,200 units) and the maximum number of strategic delivery vehicles by more than one half to 700 units (the ceiling prior to the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms had been 1,600 units, while the Treaty on

Strategic Offensive Reductions had not restricted them). An additional limit of 800 units is established for deployed and undeployed launchers of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles, as well as heavy bombers. By the verification date of 5 February 2018, Russia had fully complied with its obligations to reduce its arms in accordance with the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. The total capacity of strategic arms held by Russia was even lower than the limits for deployed vehicles and warheads set out in that Treaty. As at 5 February 2018, Russia had declared 527 deployed delivery vehicles for strategic offensive weapons (intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers) and 1,444 warheads attributable to them, as well as 779 deployed or undeployed heavy bombers and launchers of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

The Russian Federation has unilaterally taken a range of other significant measures. It has, in particular, reduced by three quarters the number of non-strategic nuclear weapons. We reassigned these weapons to the undeployed category after concentrating them exclusively within the boundaries of the national territory at centralized storage bases, where an extremely strict security regime is enforced. Another step in this direction was the decision by the Russian Federation for its nuclear weapons not to be target-specific, as they are not equipped with target assignment capabilities.

Russian military policy has significantly diminished the role and the significance of nuclear weapons. The possibility of using them is restricted to two exceptional cases: an attack on Russia and its allies using weapons of mass destruction or when the very existence of the State is endangered as a result of aggression against our country. That is, strictly for defensive purposes. We observe in this regard that allegations about the increasing role of nuclear weapons in Russian policy documents are inaccurate. This is further supported by the emergence of the concept of "non-nuclear deterrence" in the military policy of Russia.

Further progress in nuclear disarmament requires efforts by all States concerned. Any advances in this area must serve to strengthen international security and stability. A realistic approach to nuclear disarmament, based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, would involve the gradual and mandatory involvement of all States with nuclear military capabilities. This is the only way in which it would be possible to achieve a balance of interests acceptable to all parties, ensure consideration of crucial international security issues and create an environment conducive to progress towards nuclear disarmament.

Ukraine

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Ukraine, as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee, has been exercising control over international transfers of goods that could be used for the creation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of their delivery. Ukraine has also taken measures for the establishment of responsibility and penalties for violation of its national legislation in that area in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

In 2004, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Decree No. 86, which sets out the procedures for international transfers of dual-use goods, including nuclear

goods. The lists of the dual-use goods that are subject to the above-mentioned procedures are attached as annexes 1–5 to the Decree. The structure and content of the lists correspond to the control lists of the international export control regimes, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Australia Group.

In order to ensure transparency in transfers, and pursuant to its national legislation, Ukraine submits reports to IAEA on international transfers of specified equipment and non-nuclear material listed in annex II to the Protocol Additional to the Agreement between Ukraine and IAEA for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Pursuant to paragraph 7.8 of the Understandings of the Zangger Committee, Ukraine submits reports to the Secretariat every year on the licences issued for the transfer, to non-nuclear-weapon States that are not parties to the Treaty, of goods specified in the trigger list and intended for peaceful purposes.